

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. 1.97(b)

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.56 and 1.97(b), Applicants bring to the attention of the Examiner the documents listed on the attached PTO-1449. This Information Disclosure Statement is being filed to the best of the undersigned's knowledge before the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits for the above-referenced application. Accordingly, Applicant does not believe that a fee is due for filing this paper.

Copies of the listed documents are attached. Also attached is a copy of a Supplementary European Search Report from the European Patent Office which issued in a counterpart foreign application, European Application No. EP 98922500. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the listed documents and evidence that consideration by making appropriate notations on the attached form.

This submission does not represent that a search has been made or that no better art exists and does not constitute an admission that the above-listed documents are material or constitute prior art. If the Examiner applies the documents as prior art against any claim in the application and Applicants determine that the cited document does not constitute prior art under United States law, Applicants reserve the right to present to the Office the relevant facts and law regarding the appropriate status of such document.

Applicants further reserve the right to take appropriate action to establish the patentability of the disclosed invention over the application and the references therein, should one or more of the documents be applied against the claims of the present application.

Except for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time

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fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account <u>50-0310</u>. This paragraph is intended to be a **constructive petition for extension of time** in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a)(3).

Dated: October 25, 2001 Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP Customer No. 09629 1800 M Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036 202-467-7000 Respectfully submitted

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